

# 2021 Colorado Health Information Technology Roadmap Project Update

Colorado's Health Information Technology Roadmap update charts a path for harnessing and expanding the digital tools and services that support the health and equity of all Coloradans. This Roadmap is being refreshed by the Office of eHealth Innovation and the eHealth Commission who are responsible for establishing and evolving state strategy in this area. Health information technology (IT) has the potential to significantly expand affordability, access, and equity in health care across the state, and its development, adoption, and coordination must occur in a systematic and intentional way to ensure quality and sustainability.

The updated strategy referred to as the 2021 Roadmap sets a course for aligning efforts across a broad range of stakeholders to achieve three shared goals by 2026:



Coloradans, providers, payers, community partners, and state and local agencies can easily access and share needed data and information to coordinate care, improve health, reduce health disparities, and lower costs.



Coloradans can access telehealth and tele-behavioral health services through adequate, affordable, and reliable high-speed broadband.



Colorado improves health equity through the broad use of modern, secure, and trusted health IT and digital health solutions.



Stakeholders that engaged in the 2021 Roadmap refresh process indicated an urgent need for Colorado to accelerate its pace and take bold steps to meet these goals.

## Recommendations include:

**Adopt specific consent forms and processes for all providers, community-based organizations, state and local agencies that enable Coloradans to authorize the exchange of their own behavioral and social health data.**

**Why it matters:** Lack of clear policy and guidance on sharing data limits any efforts to improve access to coordinated care and vital health care services. Resolving this issue is critical for meeting the goals of the Behavioral Health Administration as well as impacting the social factors that influence health for Colorado residents. It also ensures that Coloradans have control over who has access to their information.

**Implement and incentivize standardized processes and specific data standards for providers to collect and exchange demographic and social data elements as well as physical, oral, and behavioral health data through health information exchanges.**

**Why it matters:** Requiring all providers to use similar data standards means that everyone is sharing comparable data, regardless of what electronic medical record they use or how they store information. Intentional and safe collection of demographic data, including race and ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation can improve quality of care and address health inequities.

*Over for More*

**Codify the authority of the Office of eHealth Innovation and eHealth Commission in state legislation, and clarify their relationships with state agencies, health information exchanges, and other stakeholders.**

**Why it matters:** The Office of eHealth Innovation (OeHI) is responsible for all aspects of Colorado's health IT strategy. Codifying OeHI's authority in statute empowers OeHI to align needed policies, funding, and technology services across Colorado to advance shared state goals and priorities.

**Ensure equitable financial supports and incentives are available so that all providers delivering health-related services to Coloradans in-person or virtually can connect to a health information exchange.**

**Why it matters:** All providers need to share and have secure access to needed data and information to deliver whole-person, high-quality care. Today, many Colorado providers delivering behavioral health care, long-term services and supports, emergency care, and oral health services are not connected to health information exchanges, making it difficult to provide optimal care for each patient at lower costs.

**Establish core data services available to and used by all Colorado providers, community organizations, and state agencies to advance shared goals.**

**Why it matters:** Core services developed for and accessible to all stakeholders, including state agencies and private-sector providers and partners, bring coherence and alignment across Colorado's decentralized and patchwork IT system. These services can also ensure all Coloradans have equitable access to all health and social information from state agencies or private providers through a single portal.

**Create a Colorado Innovation Resource Center to support residents, providers, and community partners in accessing trusted information, resources, and support for health IT, telehealth, and other digital health solutions.**

**Why it matters:** The Center would provide an opportunity to highlight and expand the use of best practices for human-centered design and other technology and digital health solutions, especially those that advance health equity and reduce health disparities. The Center would serve as a trusted resource for up-to-date information on policy and regulations, including guidance on cybersecurity. The Center would incubate the development and implementation of innovative digital health solutions.

## Next Steps

**The 2021 Roadmap refresh will be completed by September 30, 2021.**

To date, the Office of eHealth Innovation has engaged with community partners and providers across the state as well as state agency leaders through more than 30 meetings and interviews.



A brief online survey requesting feedback on Roadmap recommendations will be distributed statewide in mid-August.



Two in-person listening sessions are scheduled for August (in Haxtun and Trinidad), and two online listening sessions will be held on August 27 from 8-9am and September 1 from 6-7pm. The September 1 webinar will offer live Spanish interpretation.